

29. (Unamended From Previous Version) The method according to Claim 27, wherein the peeling is carried out while holding the electroconductive film by an electromagnet.

30. (New) A method of producing a solar cell, comprising the step of forming a separation layer on a substrate and forming a semiconductor thin film on the separation layer, the step of bonding a film onto the semiconductor thin film with an adhesive, the step of exerting an external force on the film to peel the semiconductor thin film away from the substrate, and the step of forming an electrode, or another semiconductor thin film and an electrode on a back surface of the semiconductor thin film thus peeled.

REMARKS

Claims 19 to 22 and 27 to 30 are in the application, with Claim 30 being newly-added. Claims 19, 21, 27 and 30 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants respectfully submit that newly-added Claim 30 is generic to Species I-A, Species I-B, and Species II, each of which having been identified by the Examiner in the August 1, 2002 Office Action (Paper No. 5). Generic Claim 30 is believed to be allowable and upon its allowance, Applicants submit that they are entitled to allowance of all claims directed to the species which are encompassed by generic Claim 30. (M.P.E.P. § 806.04(d)).

Applicants respond to the Election Requirement by provisionally electing, with traverse, Species I-A, which is defined in the Office Action as being drawn to a light transmitting film bonded to the semiconductor thin film wherein the second conductive layer is formed prior to peeling. Applicants submit that Claims 19 and 20 read on provisionally-elected Species I-A, and that Claim 30 encompasses Species I-A (i.e., Claims 19 and 20) as well as Species I-B and II (i.e., Claims 21, 22 and 27 to 29).

Applicants traverse the requirement for an election of species on the grounds that there would not be a serious burden on the Examiner to examine the three species in a single application. In particular, it is Applicants' prerogative to present claims directed to a "reasonable" number of species in a single application. See 37 C.F.R. § 1.141. In this application, three species have been identified by the Examiner, which is believed to be fully "reasonable" and further is not believed to be unduly burdensome on the Examiner.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the Election Of Species Requirement are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
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Respectfully submitted,


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